

CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES - WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY 2023

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET COMMITTEE EQUALITIES HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 12 JULY 2023 AT 10:00

Present

Councillor W R Goode – Chairperson

A R Berrow	HJ David	N Farr	D M Hughes
RL Penhale-Thomas	A Wathan	AJ Williams	HM Williams
E D Winstanley			

Apologies for Absence

JPD Blundell, M J Evans, J Gebbie, J Llewellyn-Hopkins and JC Spanswick

Officers:

Zoe Edwards	Consultation Engagement and Equalities Manager
Stephen Griffiths	Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Lucy King	Consultation & Engagement Officer
Michael Pitman	Technical Support Officer – Democratic Services
Kirsty Williams	Partnership & CSP Manager

24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr E Winstanley – Personal Interest in Item 7 as she was member of Awen Trust

25. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the 20/03/2023 be approved as a true and accurate record

26. ANNUAL REPORT ON EQUALITY IN THE WORKFORCE - 2022-23

Group Manager HR and Organisational Development presented report which The Group Manager HR and Organisational development presented a report which updated the Cabinet Committee Equalities with a summary of the equality profile of the Council's workforce as at 31st March 2023.

He highlighted appendix 1, which provided an equality profile with comparative data from the previous two years. The data included protected characteristics of the workforce as listed at 3.2 of the report.

The Group Manager HR and Organisational development explained that the Council continued to work through the Strategic Equality Plan in terms of specific actions. The Equalities monitoring form was currently being revised and rollout of this was planned during 2023/24.

The Group Manager HR and Organisational development outlined some of the key monitoring stats in relation to the spread of diversity across the Councils workforce and stated that there were no significant changes on previous years. He highlighted the exception which were the figures for disability, which showed an increased identification of disability compared with previous years.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration stated that we had an aging workforce in the Council, with 46% of the overall workforce being over 50 years of age. He asked what the Council was doing to recruit younger people and encouraging them to pursue a career in BCBC and to ensure succession planning and risk mitigation.

The Group Manager HR and Organisational development explained that recognising the challenge we have with recruitment and retention of staff in BCBC we were looking to develop the Strategic Workforce Plan and looking to engage with schools, colleges and other further/higher education establishments.

The Deputy Leader echoed the comments of the Cabinet Member and stated that further care needed to be taken on this issue as each year the challenge will be greater and this is reflected also in the aging population of Bridgend.

The Leader stated that the figures for disability identification were a positive reflection on people feeling comfortable disclosing this and understanding that it would not impact negatively on themselves. He stressed the importance that people of all disabilities played in the workforce within BCBC.

A Member asked how many staff completed the information in the report and therefore did it accurately represent the majority of the workforce within BCBC. The Group Manager HR and Organisational development stated that gender and age was a mandatory completion and therefore we held 100% of this data, however all other fields are voluntary and not all staff complete this data and therefore this varied across the questions.

RESOLVED: that the Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the information contained in this report and within Appendix 1.

27. **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENTS - ANNUAL REVIEW - 2022-23**

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report which updated Members on the Council's requirement to undertake Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs), an overview of the Council's approach to EIAs and an outline of EIAs undertaken in Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) service areas in 2022/2023.

She explained that the EIA process was a tool to assess whether new (or changes to existing) policies/services/functions, or the removal of services, could impact on different sectors of society in different ways. EIAs should be carried out when making strategic decisions. An e-learning module has been made available to employees which provides an overview of EIAs, their role in improving services and a guide to conducting them.

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager stated that between April 2022 and March 2023, four full EIAs were undertaken and accompanied Cabinet reports and these were listed in Appendix One. Sixty-two EIA screenings were undertaken during this period and these are listed in Appendix Two. Further information was at sections 3 and 4 of the report.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Planning and Regeneration said it was encouraging to see over 250 employees who had completed this training. He asked if employees who had not completed the training were able to assess whether reports needed a full EIA, and would they be required to complete the training before they were able to carry out an EIA. The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager confirmed that staff would

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need to complete the EIA training before conducting an EIA or indeed have the ability to assess whether reports needed a full EIA.

RESOLVED: Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the progress made in the Council during 2022/23 in the completion of Equality Impact Assessments and the progress made with training.

28. ANNUAL WELSH STANDARDS REVIEW

The Consultation, Engagement and Equalities Manager presented a report which informed Cabinet Committee Equalities of the content and approach taken with the council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report for 2022/2023.

She explained that the Council's Welsh Language Standards Annual Report 2022/2023 covered the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 and was published, as required, by 30 April 2023. The report was attached as Appendix One (Welsh) and Appendix Two (English). The various elements of reporting that were required to be published were set out at section 3 of the report.

The Leader welcomed the report and was pleased with the progress that had been made since last year. He was pleased with the recent 'Little Welsh Festival' at Bryngarw Park and an example of how we were working together with other organisations like Menter Bro Ogwr.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration stated that he was attending a Welsh Medium Primary School with Cllr Blundell tomorrow with the Minister for Welsh Language and Education to discuss what we are doing across the borough to encourage parents to send children to Welsh Medium Schools, take up the Welsh language in their spare time and promote the language. The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration added that any Member who wished to learn Welsh could sign up through the Democratic Services team

RESOLVED: Cabinet Committee Equalities noted this report and the progress made during 2022/2023 in meeting its Welsh Language duties.

29. ANTI-RACIST WALES ACTION PLAN UPDATE

The Partnership and CSP Manager presented a report which updated the Cabinet Committee Equalities on the work underway and being considered to deliver the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan for Bridgend County Borough Council.

She explained that on 7 June 2022 Welsh Government published the Anti-racist Wales Action Plan setting out the intention to be an anti-racist nation by 2030. The Plan covers actions to be undertaken between June 2022 to June 2024 with the intention being to learn from the work undertaken during this period. Since the publication of the Plan we have been liaising with colleagues across South Wales around approaches for the delivery of the Plan and are awaiting updates on the appointment of implementation leads.

The Partnership and CSP Manager explained that in the absence of leads, the Community Safety Partnership in Bridgend have worked with Equalities and the regional Community Cohesion officer for Western Bay to discuss how the council can deliver the Plan. Further details were at section 3 of the report.

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The Deputy Leader asked that we ensure as a Council that trade unions and people who have lived through these experiences are included in conversations and ultimately contribute to the revised plans for future years.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration asked if Officers could be mindful of timeframes and look to move ahead with this plan, as it could take some time to get clarification from Welsh Government. As an authority and borough we need to ensure we take a zero tolerance approach to racism and this plan will aid us in that.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration also asked what work was being done with other organisations to ensure that the cultural diversity of Wales was understood and took into account when developing our policies, providing services and driving changes forward. The Chair echoed these comments and suggested that we could have speakers at these meetings to talk about various equalities issues.

The Leader suggested an additional recommendation to look at identifying local leads within the organisation to drive the plan forward.

The Cabinet Member Housing, Planning and Regeneration asked if an update report could be provided to the next committee on the LGBTQ action plan and suggested that as a committee, we look at all reports from Welsh Government to ensure a holistic approach to our plans

RESOLVED: Cabinet Committee Equalities noted the content of this update report and; Local Leads be identified within the organization

30. URGENT ITEMS

None